

AGENDA

Local Historic District Information Session

14 September 2005, 7:00 pm

Stevens Memorial Library Meeting Room

1. Introduction

Liz Fennessy, Machine Shop Village Resident

- History of Machine Shop Village project
- Purpose of this meeting

2. Local Historic District

Kathy Szyska, North Andover Historic Commission

- Description of Local Historic District Regulations (lowest level)
- Process for making exterior building modification in a LHD
- Importance of Designation
- Neighborhood Conservation District alternative

3. Old Center Local Historic District

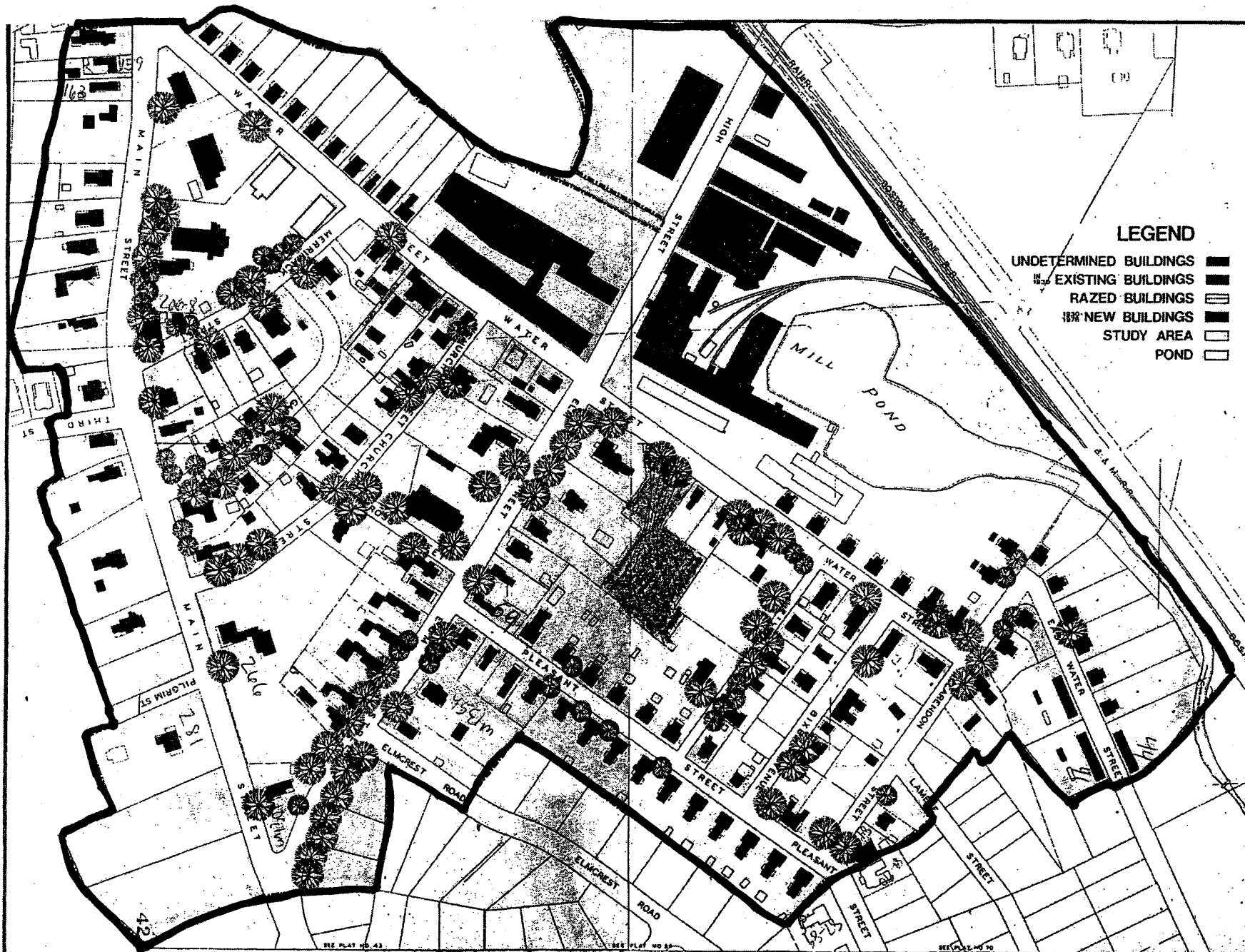
George Schruender, Old Center Local Historic District Commission and Machine Shop Village property owner

- History of the Old Center Local Historic District
- Role of Old Center Local Historic District Commission
- Examples of process for exterior modifications – grants and denials

4. Question and Answer Period

5. Next Steps

- Mailed survey, evaluate neighborhood consensus
- Requests for additional information
- North Andover Historical Society Tour of Machine Shop Village 9/24
- Other

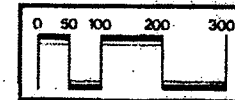


LEGEND

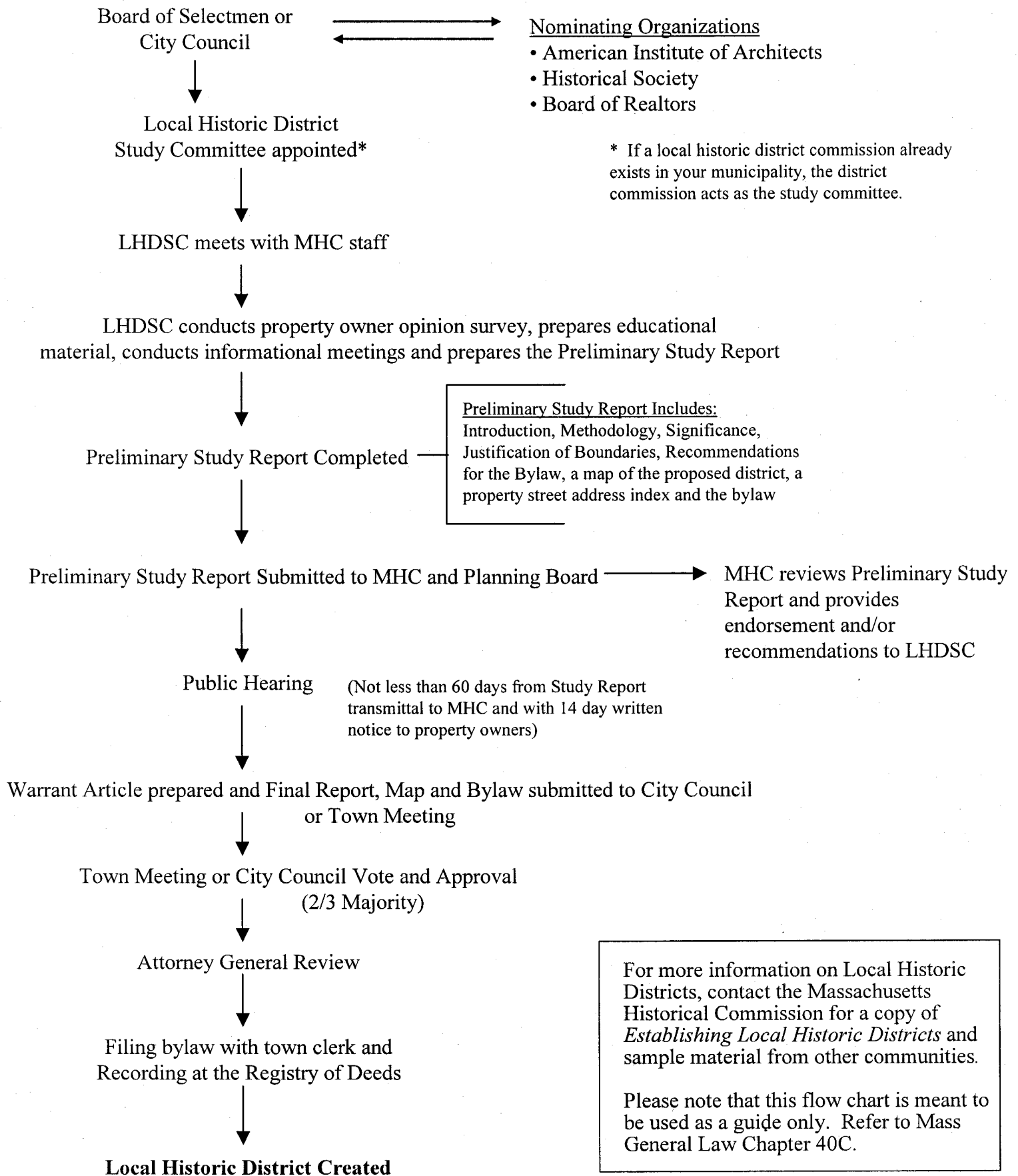
- UNDETERMINED BUILDINGS [Symbol: solid black rectangle]
- EXISTING BUILDINGS [Symbol: rectangle with horizontal lines]
- RAZED BUILDINGS [Symbol: rectangle with vertical lines]
- NEW BUILDINGS [Symbol: rectangle with cross-hatching]
- STUDY AREA [Symbol: thick black outline]
- POND [Symbol: irregular white shape]

MACHINE SHOP VILLAGE 1978 NORTH ANDOVER · MASSACHUSETTS

HARVARD GRADUATE SCHOOL OF DESIGN
LANDSCAPE DEPARTMENT MAY 1978
HISTORIC PRESERVATION STUDIO LA-2B
TRUDI HOFMANN JOHN LOEHR

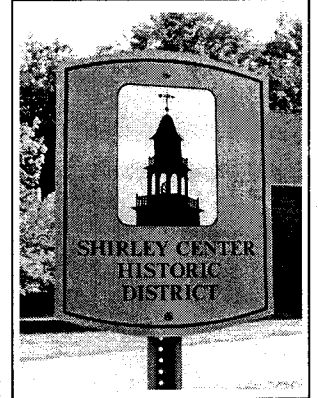


Establishing a Local Historic District Flow Chart



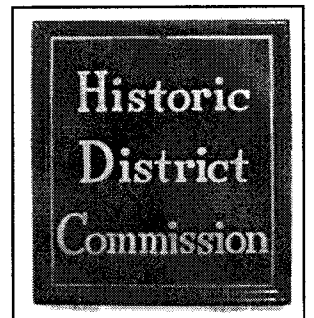
Local Historic Districts in Massachusetts

Local Historic Districts offer the strongest form of protection for the preservation of historic structures. The first local historic districts in Massachusetts were established on Nantucket and Beacon Hill in 1955. Since then, over 220 local historic districts have been established in Massachusetts. Local historic districts can be credited with saving numerous historic communities from inappropriate alteration and demolition.



Local Historic Districts can be found throughout Massachusetts in communities such as New Bedford, Longmeadow and Shirley.

In a local historic district, any proposed changes to exterior architectural features visible from a public way are reviewed by a locally appointed Historic District Commission. For instance, if a building addition was proposed in a local historic district, the property owner would submit an application to the Historic District Commission. The Historic District Commission would hold a public hearing and make a determination on whether the new addition was appropriate. If the addition was appropriate, the Historic District Commission would issue a Certificate, allowing the work to progress. Many Historic District Commissions have prepared *Historic District Design Guidelines* that clarify how proposed projects should respect the existing historic character.



In a local historic district, there is no review of interior features. In addition, a variety of exterior features are often exempt such as air conditioning units, storm doors, storm windows, paint color and temporary structures. The decision on which features are exempt from review depends on how the local bylaw is written.

According to M.G.L. Chapter 40C, the first step in the creation of a local historic district is the appointment of a Local Historic District Study Committee by the Board of Selectmen. The basic steps of creating a local historic district are outlined in the flow chart on the opposite side. For a list of local historic districts in Massachusetts, contact the Massachusetts Historical Commission for a copy of *Preservation through Bylaws and Ordinances*.

There's a Difference

Note that there is a big difference between a National Register District and a Local Historic District. For a brochure entitled "There's a Difference" contact the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth
Chairman, Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, MA 02125
(617) 727-8470

Historic Districts & Neighborhood Conservation Districts in Cambridge, MA

WHAT ARE HISTORIC DISTRICTS AND NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION DISTRICTS?

Historic Districts: Historic districts are areas in which historic buildings and their settings are protected by public review. Historic district ordinances are local laws that are adopted by communities using powers granted by the state. Historic districts comprise the city's significant historic and architectural resources. Inclusion in a historic district signifies that a property contributes to an ensemble that is worth protecting by virtue of its historic importance or architectural quality. Historic districts deserve special protection because they enhance our shared quality of life.

Neighborhood Conservation Districts: These districts are groups of buildings that are architecturally and historically distinctive. There are five NCDs in Cambridge. A different commission administers each of the five NCDs. These NCD commissions are empowered to approve new construction, demolition, and alterations that are visible from a public way. The establishment of an NCD recognizes the particular design and architectural qualities of special neighborhoods in Cambridge and encourages their protection and maintenance for the benefit of the entire city.

WHAT PURPOSE DO HISTORIC DISTRICTS AND NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION DISTRICTS SERVE?

These designations were created to preserve buildings that are architecturally and historically significant. The establishment of such districts and landmarks recognizes the particular historic and architectural qualities of neighborhoods and buildings in Cambridge and encourages their protection and maintenance for the benefit of the entire City.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A HISTORIC DISTRICT AND A NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION DISTRICT?

The regulations in the neighborhood conservation districts are tailored to the needs of the particular neighborhood and are generally less strict than those in historic districts.

DOES BEING IN A HISTORIC DISTRICT MEAN THAT I CAN NEVER CHANGE THE APPEARANCE OF MY PROPERTY?

No. Properties in historic districts are not frozen in time. Historic district protection is designed to ensure that when changes occur, they do not destroy the unique qualities of the district.

DOES BEING IN A NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION DISTRICT MEAN THAT I CAN NEVER CHANGE THE APPEARANCE OF MY PROPERTY?

No. Properties in neighborhood conservation districts are not frozen in time. Neighborhood conservation district protection is designed to ensure that a neighborhood's distinctive qualities are taken into account when changes occur. Most routine and minor changes are reviewed on-the-spot by the Historical Commission staff. Many other changes are reviewed by the neighborhood conservation district commission in an advisory, non-binding capacity. Binding review in a public hearing is generally reserved for major changes, such as demolition, new construction, and major exterior alteration, that would affect neighborhood character.

Copied from website: <http://www.cambridgema.gov/~Historic/districts.html> on 13 September 2005

boston.com

THIS STORY HAS BEEN FORMATTED FOR EASY PRINTING

Teardowns galvanize residents to preserve

The Boston Globe

By Sally Heaney, Globe Correspondent | September 4, 2005

CONCORD -- Seeking a more effective tool to preserve endangered buildings, two Concord neighborhoods are exploring whether to employ a little-used weapon in the arsenal of historic preservation.

Residents of the areas around Prescott and Revolutionary roads are considering establishing neighborhood conservation districts, which could control major changes to structures within the districts.

The Concord Historical Commission and Planning Board plan to have an official of the Massachusetts Historical Commission speak on the topic at a public meeting this fall. Christopher Skelly, director of the state commission's local government programs, has been making presentations around the state to local historical commissions and others to raise awareness about neighborhood conservation districts. Though these districts have been used successfully in other parts of the country, the only five in Massachusetts are in Cambridge.

Skelly said he will hold a regional meeting in Westford this month, although a date has not been set. In addition, Lincoln's Planning Board has formed a study committee to look into whether neighborhood conservation districts would be good for some areas of that town.

According to Skelly, the two most common means of preserving historic structures in the state -- demolition-delay bylaws and historic districts -- aren't working well enough.

"We are losing too much of our irreplaceable heritage in Massachusetts annually," said Skelly.

Conservation districts are initiated by residents of a neighborhood and established by a town meeting or city council. The Massachusetts Historical Commission has created a template that can be customized for a neighborhood.

Under the template, the only matters that must come before the district's review board are demolition, new construction, major alterations, and additions, Skelly said. The neighborhood can also give nonbinding advisory reviews on other architectural changes.

By contrast, in a historic district, also created by town meeting, even such things as paint color can be dictated.

In Concord, Deborah Bier of Prescott Road is concerned about the future of her neighborhood, which is off Route 62 near Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge. Bier is also chairwoman of the Concord Historical Commission. One preservation option she is exploring is working with her neighbors to ask the town to designate the area as a neighborhood conservation district.

"I'm not advocating to my neighbors that we should do this, but we should educate ourselves and learn about it," she said.

The homes were built in the 1950s to deal with the post-World War II housing shortage created by returning soldiers. "It's part of the housing history," Bier said. "We had a terrible housing crunch after the war. This was kind of en masse affordable housing when it was built."

In addition to its value for its place in history, the neighborhood is worth preserving as one of the relatively less expensive places to live in Concord, Bier said. But several homes have been torn down recently and replaced by larger homes of a different scale and style than the rest of the area.

"This is a really important time in Concord's history to pause and say, 'Do we go ahead with teardowns and make our housing stock less affordable and variable?' " Bier said. "There really is no going back. If we decide we want to tear down our homes, we need to do it with awareness."

Sally Heaney can be reached at heaney@globe.com. ■

© Copyright 2005 The New York Times Company